November 5, 2002

To: NITC Commissioners

From: Anne Byers

Subject: Community Council Report

Technologies Across Nebraska Update.   In partnership with Technologies Across Nebraska, the Community Council has begun working with eight communities to develop IT plans.   The eight communities are Alliance; Brown Keya Paha/Rock Counties; Crawford-Harrison; Custer County; Edgar; Fillmore County; West Point; and York County.   Introductory meetings have been held with six of the eight communities.   Most of the communities are in the process of conducting a community assessment using the Community Information Technology Planning and Assessment Workbook (http://www.nitc.state.ne.us/toolkit/workbook).   Members of one community technology committee requested a sample plan.   In response to their suggestion, a sample plan was developed and placed on the Community IT Toolkit site as well as links to actual plans developed by other communities.

The last Technologies Across Nebraska meeting was held on October 31 and focused on e-government.   The University of Nebraska Extension will begin offering classes on e-government for local government officials.

As Technologies Across Nebraska becomes a more action-oriented organization, the Technologies Across Nebraska action plan will be updated.

Nebraska Universal Service Fund Update. The Nebraska Public Service Commission will hold a hearing on November 6 on the use of Nebraska Universal Service Funds to support telehealth.   The Nebraska Hospital Association and the Nebraska Telehealth Development Group have filed testimony. Through its monthly meetings, the Community Council Subcommittee on Telehealth has facilitated discussions among health care providers on this issue.

New Report on IT Training Needs of Midwest Businesses.   The AIM Institute and six Midwestern community colleges have studied the IT training needs of firms in the region. The findings are analyzed in three reports available from the AIM Web site (www.aimlink.org).   The study found that the five training areas rated most important by Midwest businesses are telecommunications; data; e-commerce; client server; and human factor engineering.   The professional development topics ranked most important are WAN/LAN; TCP/IP; VPN; wireless; project management (PPM); security (SANS/CISSP); disaster planning and recovery; and SQL.